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Note verbale dated 1 July 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to enclose herewith a letter from the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Republika Srpska, Mladen Ivanić, addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina has further the honour to request the circulation of the enclosed letter as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 1 July 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

29 June 2015

Regarding the fact that there is no consensus of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina on a draft resolution of the United Nations on the occurrences in Srebrenica, I am writing you this letter on my own behalf. The lack of consensus within the Presidency shows clearly that there is no common position on this resolution among the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consequently, the presence of the representatives of the Permanent Representation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations at the meetings where the resolution is discussed cannot be interpreted as a support to the resolution of the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bearing in mind the aforementioned, it means that support and consent does not exist on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina for any move by the Security Council with regard to a resolution on Srebrenica. Almost half of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina is against this resolution and therefore I, as a Serb member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, ask that it is not approved by the organs of the United Nations. There is a unanimous consensus among Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina that this resolution is anti-Serb in nature, for it not even once mentions Serb victims in the Srebrenica surroundings, and it will never be genuinely accepted by a large part of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Accordingly, its possible approval will not entail any positive consequences; moreover, it will additionally divide the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society.

Before the resolution was announced, there were positive discussions in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the necessity of economic and social reforms; there was a serious debate about the future and our efforts to become a member of the European Union. The Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina unanimously endorsed the written commitment of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the European future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Stabilization and Association Agreement entered into force seven years after it had been signed. There was a high degree of consent and internal compromise.

Unfortunately, the arrest of Naser Orić and the political euphoria that was created afterwards by the association of the victims of Srebrenica and Bosniac politicians, together with the dispute on the resolution within Bosnia and Herzegovina, completely reversed the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Today, nobody speaks about the future, everybody looks back into the past, each side with its own theory about what happened during the last war. While some support the resolution (dominantly Bosniacs), others are absolutely against it (dominantly Serbs), and yet others are indifferent (dominantly Croats). We are deeply divided again and part of the cause lies in the conception of the resolution that is discussed in the United Nations organs.

The commemoration of 11 July in Srebrenica should have passed as the most dignified act of paying respect to the innocent victims. Unfortunately, the latest occurrences turned the forthcoming 11 July into a first class political event. Within Bosnia and Herzegovina there is a competition in proposals of different resolutions and declarations, which are approved or rejected by outvoting of one of the peoples,

and the resolution divided not only the region but also the Security Council. The rhetoric of the political discourse is getting more and more vehement, some politicians are declared welcome to Srebrenica, while others are not. I want to warn all of you that the current situation is bad and to call on you to perceive that the approval of this resolution is not good for the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is not my intention to influence or change anybody's view on the character of what occurred in Srebrenica. Each and every one of you has a personal position and I have no intention to change it. My request consists in thinking about the future instead of the past, to develop cooperation instead of divisions. In my opinion, instead of this resolution, respect should have been paid to the innocent victims of Srebrenica, an appeal should have been made so that it could never happen again anywhere, and the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina should have been invited to pay respects to the innocent victims of other peoples, because Serbs and Croats were killed in this war too, and to make an appeal to all of them to turn together towards the future. I cannot comprehend why there is no resolution on the positive effects of the Dayton Agreement, the anniversary of which we celebrate this year, as I also cannot understand why the powers outside Bosnia and Herzegovina need to put so much emphasis on the issues that are dividing us instead of the ones that unite us. You have a great responsibility in the days to come, so I would like to make an appeal to you not to make Srebrenica the cause of either our disputes or yours, and to call on you to find a solution that will be beneficial to all. The current form of the resolution, the vocabulary that is used in it, cannot be endorsed, firstly by the Serbs, but also on the part of other peoples, and its approval would divide us further. I am convinced, hence, that you will give up its endorsement.

(*Signed*) Mladen **Ivanić**
Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina